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NEWS RELEASE

DANIEL J. CURRAN TO ASSUME UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON PRESIDENCY, 'I'M STEPPING INTO A GREAT TRADITION,' FIRST LAY LEADER SAYS

DAYTON, Ohio — Sons Sean and Aidan Curran are enrolled in Oliver Purnell's summer basketball camp.

The family moves into their new home in Washington Township later this month.

Since Daniel J. Curran's appointment as the University of Dayton's president in February, he's made half a dozen trips to campus to meet with faculty leaders, administrators, students and alumni and a jaunt across the globe to China to explore exchange programs. A jogger who runs two or three times a week, Curran sets a pace that's hard to match.

On July 1, he officially takes over the helm of the University of Dayton, the largest independent university in the state that now ranks among the 10 largest Catholic universities in the nation.

The University of Dayton will welcome Curran and his family with typical Marianist hospitality, beginning with a 12:05 p.m. Mass in the Immaculate Conception Chapel followed by an ice cream social from 1 to 2:30 p.m. in the Kennedy Union Plaza. Faculty, staff, students, alumni and the public are invited to both events. Graeter's Inc. will supply the ice cream.

Curran replaces Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M., who served a record 23 years. He's the first lay president in UD's 152-year history, but the Philadelphia native argues he's not breaking new ground.

"From the very beginning, the Marianists have been involved with the laity," Curran said. "After the French Revolution, Father William Joseph Chaminade brought together men and women, laity and religious, to create a new religious order that served the youth and poor. When you walk around campus, you see lay people and the Marianists working together. My appointment may be seen as groundbreaking, but it's part of the Marianist tradition.

"I'm stepping into a great tradition."

Faced with a dwindling supply of religious, about half of the nation's Catholic campuses are now run by lay presidents, compared with 30 percent in 1991, according to the Association

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of Catholic Colleges and Universities. UD is not the first major Catholic university to appoint a lay leader. Georgetown, the nation's oldest Catholic university, named a lay president last year. The other two Marianist universities in the country, St. Mary's University in San Antonio and Chaminade University in Honolulu, are already run by lay leaders.

A sociologist by training whose textbooks have been used in some of UD's sociology courses, the 51-year-old Curran said he feels "an ideological compatibility" with the University of Dayton. "This is a place that educates professionals with a conscience. I view the University as a social force, as a social change agent. It's a place where I can grow in my own faith and make a difference as its leader."

During monthly visits to campus, he's enjoyed dinner with Marianists and students in the neighborhood, popped his head into a late-night prayer service in a residence hall chapel and joined in the frivolity of a campus "porch party" farewell for Fitz. "I've been impressed with the overriding sense of community and family spirit. It's a strong community of challenge and support that you find on few college campuses in the country."

At Saint Joseph's University, where he served for 23 years in various capacities but most recently as executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs, he regularly strolled across campus, stopping often to chat. He brings that same collegial style of leadership here.

One student who met the new president described his energy as infectious. "I'm also very approachable. People shouldn't be afraid to come up to me on the street. I'm someone who believes strongly in consensus building," Curran said.

In discussions with faculty and staff and in a letter to alumni and community leaders, Curran said he will spend his first year developing a strong rapport with faculty, staff and students, visiting alumni chapters around the country and meeting community leaders. "We will talk about what it means to be a great Catholic university and find ways to strengthen the strong Catholic intellectual tradition," he wrote in the letter to alumni. "We will work to improve the University of Dayton's international reach. We will become a more diverse campus, starting this fall with one of the largest first-year classes of African-American students in UD's history. We will continue to open up new enrollment markets, and we will work to strengthen the University's academic reputation."

Curran credits Fitz for the University of Dayton's strong academic foundation. "This is a quality institution. I knew that when I interviewed for the presidency, but the curricular innovations, faculty strength and research achievements are far beyond my expectations.

"I'm leaving a lot of friends and an institution that I love, but I see all the promise. I can't wait."

Biographical Sketch Daniel J. Curran

Daniel J. Curran is the first lay leader in the University of Dayton's 152-year history. The Philadelphia native became UD's 18th president on July 1, 2002.

A sociologist by training, he spent 23 years in various administrative and faculty positions at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, most recently as executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs.

Colleagues praise Curran, 51, for his collegial leadership style, vision, energy, approachability and strong commitment to social justice. At Saint Joseph's University, he's credited with boosting the school's enrollment, test scores and academic reputation while introducing technology into the curriculum and improving the university's international reach.

His passion for social justice runs deep. He has served on the boards of Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society, a nonprofit organization that purchases and rehabilitates homes in Camden, N.J., and Philadelphia's Summerbridge Program, a college-prep program for minority middle-school students. For six years, he traveled with students to Tijuana, Mexico, on a service-learning project. Just recently he received the 2002 Eternal Flame Award, an international award given for "exceptional contribution to the field of Holocaust education."

"A Catholic university must be a social force for change," he said when he was appointed president in February 2002. "As a community of educators, we must analyze the causes of social injustice and educate professionals with a conscience."

Most of Curran's research has focused on ways to address social inequality. His prolific scholarly record includes seven books in nine years, most of which he co-authored with his wife, Claire M. Renzetti, chair of the sociology department at Saint Joseph's University. One of their books is currently in press: *Theories of Crime: A Reader*. In 1993, the University of Pittsburgh Press published his *Dead Laws for Dead Men*, a historical analysis of coal mine health and safety legislation.

Before becoming a vice president at Saint Joseph's University, Curran served as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for four years. He started his academic career there in 1979 with a series of faculty positions in the department of sociology, including chair from 1988 to 1992. As a professor of sociology, he has taught courses in criminology, social problems, juvenile justice and white-collar crime. Curran also served as president of the faculty senate at Saint Joseph's University.

In 1990, he served as a Fulbright Senior Scholar at the University of Melbourne in Australia. He holds a concurrent professorship at Nanjing University in China.

Curran earned a Ph.D. from the University of Delaware in 1980 after receiving a master's degree from Temple University in 1978 and a bachelor's degree from Saint Joseph's University in 1973 — all in sociology. Curran and his wife, Claire Renzetti, have two sons, Sean, 13, and Aidan, 12.